

17th CMS Scientific Council, Bergen, Norway (17-18 November 2011)

Information Note

Note from the GFW 2011 Organising Committee¹:

1. At the request of the CMS Flyways Working Group Chair, this Information Note has been prepared rapidly, for consideration by the 17th Meeting of the Scientific Council, by the organising committee of the Global Waterbird Flyways Workshop held in Seosan City, Republic of Korea on 17-20 October 2011.
2. For the first time, the workshop brought together representatives from multiple flyway-scale initiatives covering different flyways, so as to compare and contrast how the different initiatives operate, and to share experiences and lessons learned. While participants were primarily involved with waterbird conservation, representatives of bird of prey, landbird and seabird initiatives were also present.
3. The Workshop was designed to contribute to, and enrich, the considerations by Scientific Council and Contracting Parties at COP10 on matters of flyway conservation in the future shape of the CMS, and to respond to the request made by Ramsar Contracting Parties at their COP10 in 2008 for the establishment of such collaborative mechanisms between waterbird flyway initiatives.
4. It is important to keep in mind that owing to the timing of the Workshop very shortly before the meeting of the Scientific Council, the Workshop conclusions and recommendations provided here should be considered as draft, and are likely to be subject to further amendment and updating following review by the workshop participants.
5. Attached to this covering note is a document which provides a summary of the draft conclusions prepared by the workshop.
6. A full Workshop report is in preparation and will include an extended summary of the workshop issues considered, conclusions and recommendations. This will be published jointly and circulated in 2012 as a *Ramsar Technical Report* and CMS/AEWA report.
7. The Scientific Council is, in particular, invited to note the agreement by the workshop participants to continue flyway initiatives' collaboration through the establishment of a "Global Interflyway Network" (GIN), and to consider how this network could best contribute to any future flyways work which may be requested under CMS.

¹ BirdLife International, Convention on Migratory Species – Secretariat, Partnership for the East Asian-Australasian Flyway, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance – Secretariat, Wetlands International

Global Waterbird Flyways Workshop to promote exchange of good practice and lessons learnt

**Seosan City, South Korea
17-20 October 2011**

Draft Conclusions

1. Background and Introduction

With the generous support of Seosan City, Republic of Korea, the government of Switzerland and the Secretariat of the East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership (EAAFP), an international workshop to review good practice in international initiatives for the conservation of migratory waterbirds and other migratory bird taxa was convened by the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), BirdLife International, Wetlands International and the EAAFP Secretariat. It was attended by 35 representatives and observers from 14 international organisations and seven Korean organisations. Representatives from the Arctic Council/CAFF and the Global Flyways Network (GFN) were unable to participate owing to prior commitments. The Workshop was hosted by Seosan City at Hanseo University.

An increasing number of flyway-scale initiatives for migratory bird conservation and wise use have been established around the globe, with varied approaches and status, and with considerable and valuable experience to share. However the experiences of these initiatives, while often well publicised within their own flyway, is often poorly known elsewhere. This has led to independent evolution of approaches in different flyways and relatively little exchange of experience between flyways, or between flyway initiatives for different groups of birds e.g. waterbirds, landbirds, soaring birds and seabirds. While many of the challenges faced are similar, different approaches have been taken to tackle them.

The workshop was the first to bring together these flyway initiatives so as to share lessons learned from these different approaches, assess their strengths and weaknesses, and so provide a more global view of our flyway conservation efforts thus far.

Contracting Parties to both the Ramsar Convention and the Convention on Migratory Species have recognised the need for this inter-flyway approach, and have called for such a workshop process, focussing largely, in this first instance, on waterbirds, the taxa for which the flyway approach is most widely developed. The workshop also included representatives from raptor, landbird and seabird flyway initiatives to maximise the breadth of experience-sharing and with a view to subsequent meetings potentially focussing on those taxa.

The workshop was called in response to the request made by Ramsar Contracting Parties at its 10th Conference of the Contracting Parties (Changwon, Republic of Korea, 2008) Resolution X.22, which urged “the governing bodies of flyway initiatives to take steps to share knowledge and expertise on best practices in the development and implementation of flyway-scale waterbird conservation policies and practices, including successful means of disseminating critical supporting data and information to

stakeholders and others, and ENCOURAGES the Secretariats of Ramsar, CMS, AEWA and the biodiversity programme of the Arctic Council to work together with their governance and scientific subsidiary bodies and other interested organizations to establish a mechanism for such sharing of knowledge and experience;”.

The Workshop was also designed to respond to CMS Resolution 9.2 that called for the establishment of: “..an open-ended working group on global bird flyways within the framework of the Scientific Council to act as a think tank on flyways and frameworks, and tasked with reviewing scientific and technical issues for conservation of migratory birds and their habitats, and relevant international instruments, initiatives and processes, as the basis for future CMS policy on flyways and contributing to the work on the future shape of CMS.” and to contribute to, and be complementary to the other work of, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS) Working Groups on Flyways and on Future Shape, which are reporting to CMS COP10 in Bergen, Norway, November 2011.

Workshop presentations and discussions were organised under a) the objectives, operations and experiences of a range of statutory and voluntary flyway initiatives, and then b) examining seven common and cross-cutting themes, with the conclusions and recommendations related to each provided below. The Workshop participants also reached a number of broader, general conclusions which are provided below.

Given the short time-period between the Workshop and the provision of this document to the CMS Scientific Council for its consideration, the conclusions provided here should be considered as draft, and subject to possible amendment and/or elaboration following further review by the Workshop participants.

Flyway-relevant initiatives examined during the Workshop were:

A. Statutory intergovernmental initiatives

- The Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (CMS) and its Memoranda of Understanding
- The African-Eurasian Migratory Waterbird Agreement (AEWA)
- The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands

B. Public/Private Sector Partnerships

- East Asian-Australasian Flyway Partnership

C. Voluntary Initiatives

- Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) (Americas)
- Partners in Flight (North American landbirds)
- Western Hemisphere Migratory Species Initiative (WHMSI)
- Siberian Crane flyway initiatives (Asia)
- Raptor flyway initiatives
- BirdLife International's Global Seabird Programme
- Wings Over Wetlands (WOW) partnership (Africa-Eurasia)

The seven cross-cutting themes for flyway conservation considered by the Workshop were:

1. National engagement and implementation
2. Species conservation
3. Site/habitat conservation
4. Role of science
5. Innovative approaches
6. Developing capacity
7. Partnerships and stakeholder involvement

2. General Conclusions

2.1 Conclusions about the function of the workshop and future action

The Workshop **concluded** that:

1. Mechanisms, including this workshop, for sharing flyway initiatives' approaches, experiences and achievements are long overdue and very valuable;
2. Each participant had gained in understanding of, and the applicability of, aspects of other flyway initiatives' approaches and mechanisms, for potential future enhancement of their own initiative;
3. There is much common ground in the approaches, challenges and opportunities for implementation across all flyway initiatives discussed, regardless of their geographical location or taxonomic coverage, but each initiative needs to continue to be responsive to the national and regional specificities within its geographical scope for the focus of its attention and approach;
4. The time available for, and the scope of, this first workshop did not allow for an in-depth consideration of the themes addressed, and there would be merit in considering holding similar workshops to address further some of the specific cross-cutting themes considered in this workshop (such as innovative financing mechanisms), to consider other themes not covered in the first workshop (such as migratory species values and economic valuation); and to focus on other migratory taxa than waterbirds (such as raptors and landbirds), and
5. Rather than treating the Workshop as a one-off event, there is great merit and value in the establishment of an ongoing networking mechanism so as to build on the workshop's conclusions and to support the implementation of the recommendations of the Workshop, including through being able to further draw upon the expertise and experience of flyway conservation practitioners worldwide.

Accordingly the participants at the Workshop **agreed** to:

1. Establish an open and inclusive network of flyway-scale initiatives, so as to facilitate future networking, collaboration and information-sharing between initiatives and their personnel;

2. Entitle this network the “Global Interflyway Network” (GIN);
3. Establish electronic information-sharing and dialogue mechanisms to enable the GIN and the needs of its partners;
4. Make the capacity of the GIN, resources permitting, available to support and provide input to the work of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) addressing flyway issues, including *inter alia* CMS (and any ongoing work requested of its Flyways Working Group), AEWA and the Ramsar Convention; and to the future implementation of partnership and voluntary flyway initiatives;
5. Encourage other relevant flyway-scale initiatives not able to be present at the October 2011 workshop to participate in the GIN;

2.2 Conclusions about the ingredients of successful flyway conservation initiatives

1. Successful conservation of migratory birds – from global to flyway to local levels – strongly depends on networks of key individuals with vision, passion, commitment and drive and the networks they create, attracting others in with sufficient momentum that subsequent generations of such people have extended and perpetuated the implementation of the objectives and approaches of these networks through a more or less formalised framework;
2. These frameworks vary substantially in their origins, ranging from intergovernmental to voluntary; there is no one recipe for a successful framework for delivering flyway conservation as long as it works; and
3. The main challenge now seems to be in securing the commitment to conservation objectives of stakeholders beyond core flyway networks of like minded-people, who may be involved in driving the pressures that conservationists seek to reverse.